

# Malibu/Lost Hills Sheriff's Station

JOHN L. SCOTT, Sheriff

## Community Crime Prevention Tips

### DANGERS OF DRINKING

Alcohol is the **number one** drug of choice for teenagers. Alcohol-related car crashes are the **number one** killer of teenagers in the United States. Alcohol is the **number one** drug problem in America.

If you think it can't happen to you, look around. Check your school's yearbooks for the last ten years. How many have been dedicated to a student who was killed in a drunk driving crash? Ask your friends how many people they know that have had bad things happen to them when they were drinking. You don't even have to be the one doing the drinking. Most teenage passenger deaths are the result of alcohol-impaired teenage drivers. No matter what the situation, drinking alcohol under the age of 21 is illegal.

#### How Alcohol Affects You

- ★ You see double, speech slurs, you lose your sense of distance.
- ★ Alcohol loosens inhibitions; you make bad judgments that can result in car crashes, unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, or rape.
- ★ A significant proportion of violent crimes and vandalism among and by youth involve alcohol.
- ★ Using alcohol can cost you your freedom. You can be grounded by parents, lose your driver's license, or even end up in jail.
- ★ You can get sick or die of alcohol poisoning.
- ★ Poor grades can be a result of alcohol use.

#### Be Aware of Advertising

Take a good look at how the alcohol industry is trying to convince people to use their products.

- ★ Wine coolers are displayed in stores next to fruit drinks. Maybe they don't think you'll notice the difference between a fruit drink and one with alcohol.
- ★ Different brands of beer and other alcoholic beverages are slipped into the movies you watch. They think if you see your favorite actor drinking it, you will too.
- ★ The models on the beer commercials are always young, fit, and beautiful. But alcohol has plenty of calories and little nutritional value. Drinking it will not make you more fit or attractive.
- ★ Advertisements feature celebrities and sports figures. But drinking will not make you famous or athletic.
- ★ Alcohol advertisers are now trying to be more responsible by telling you not to drink and drive. But drunk driving is not the only way alcohol can affect your life.

## **Dangers of Drinking**

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- ★ Advertisers hope you won't stop and think when you see their ads. Don't be conned. Use your best judgment and learn the facts.

## **Some more Facts about alcohol**

- ★ The earlier young people start drinking and using drugs, the more likely they are to become addicted.
- ★ Drinking coffee, taking a cold shower, or breathing fresh air will not sober you up. The only thing that sobers you up is time—at least several hours.
- ★ One beer, one shot of whiskey, and one glass of wine all have the same amount of alcohol. Don't fall for the notion that beer and wine are less intoxicating than hard liquors.
- ★ Only 3 to 5 percent of alcoholics are what we think of as bums. Most alcoholics are just like the people you know. Anyone can become an alcoholic -- young, old, rich, poor, married, single, employed, or out of work.
- ★ Drinking alcohol does not quench your thirst; it causes dehydration.
- ★ Alcohol interferes with your central nervous system. You lose balance, coordination, and judgment.
- ★ Alcohol ages and damages the brain.
- ★ Alcoholism is hereditary.
- ★ Eight young people die in alcohol-related crashes every day.
- ★ Teens who drink alcohol are 7.5 times more likely to use any illicit drug, and 50 times more likely to use cocaine than young people who never drink alcohol.
- ★ You are breaking the law by buying or using alcohol before you are 21 years old.

## **Take Action**

- ★ Make a pledge with your friends that you will help each other avoid alcohol and other drugs. Leave parties where kids are drinking or taking drugs.
- ★ If a friend or someone you know has passed out from drinking too much alcohol, turn the person on his or her side and call 911. Too much alcohol can cause the central nervous system, which controls breathing, to shut down. Death can result.
- ★ Don't ride with someone who has been drinking. Call a taxi, your parents, or another relative or friend for a ride.
- ★ Encourage someone you think has a drinking problem to get help. Go with them to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings or to meet with a counselor.
- ★ Write ads for your school newspaper that make people aware of advertising gimmicks.
- ★ If you belong to any club or other youth group, suggest that its members organize an anti-drinking project such as an alcohol-free post-prom, graduation, or New Year's Eve party.
- ★ Make a presentation to your school's PTA meeting about how teachers and parents can help kids avoid drugs and alcohol.
- ★ Ask for help if someone is pressuring you to try alcohol or other drugs. Talk to someone you trust.

If you have any questions, please contact Deputy Shawn Brownell at (818) 878-5506.